

Colchester Community and Economic Development Advisory Council (CEDAC) Minutes July 16, 2009

Members Attending: Nanci Glindmyer, Chair, Deborah Winters, David Usher, Vice-Chair, Mike Mazza, Joe Egan, Paul Olsen. Absent: J. Churchill Hindes, Bill Peters.

Others: Kimberly Murray, Tom Torti, Director of the Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce, Megan Combs.

The minutes from June 18th were approved.

Election of Officers

After some discussion, Nanci was happy to have someone else chair for the next year if someone wanted to. Everyone has been pleased with Nanci leading the group and thanked her for her efforts. Dave was willing to chair for the upcoming year. Deb made the motion and Mike seconded it to elect David Usher as Chair and Nanci Glindmyer as Vice-Chair of CEDAC for the next year.

Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce Intern Project

Tom Torti, Director of the Chamber and their summer intern Megan visited to explain the project that Megan is working on this summer. Tom stated they would like to provide more services to Towns and explained the economic development study that they conducted for Essex last year. This project will be around rebranding and what sets Colchester apart focusing on economic development and tourism promotion. They have forwarded their tourism database that can be a platform for a website to click on for more information. They can also do a short video clip of a few businesses in Colchester. Dave mentioned we are looking at having a video component of our ED Plan. Joe mentioned he has been working with the Stowe Area Association on the use of video and web pages. Kimberly noted the recent conversation she had with James Ehlers regarding a new idea to market the Bay year round as the place to fish. We have many assets other areas of the Lake don't have and we need to come up with a tagline and promote it. Dave mentioned the EPA Watershed grant being implemented now through the town and the value of the lake's waterfront. Tom feels Malletts Bay is our strongest asset and is substantially underdeveloped, how do we leverage job creation from the asset?

Deb brought up the question of the activities of the NY Chamber across the Lake and how they are involved with the issues of taxing and state policies. They are also getting many Canadian companies to locate in New York and VT developers building there. Tom said there are two summer committees, tax and fiscal policy looking at our tax structure and spending and the second is on statewide permitting. Deb noted how can we communicate to Montpelier that more taxes means less economic development. Tom suggested that businesses, developers etc. need to actually pay a young energetic politically savvy employee to go to Montpelier to lobby these concerns. Otherwise, everyone can't afford to take the time off of work. Dave mentioned the organization he belongs to, Vermonters for Economic Health, and their view that the culture needs to change especially the leadership to see a change in what is happening in Montpelier. Tom felt even ten new people could change the culture in the House. Deb felt that less taxes means more economic development and more jobs and then more money for social services which Vermont is well known for. Dave noted there has been some discussion around the regionalization of services that the town boundary is a cost generator and asked if the Chamber focused on the cost side of living here or revenue health. Tom said the Chamber weighs in on housing, affordability of services and supports regionalization of police services, educational and

municipal cost control but they are member driven. Dave noted that the Legislature has the authority to consolidate school districts, it is not purely a local issue as it is portrayed. The Council thanked Tom and Megan for their time.

Economic Development Plan

Nanci asked about housing in the plan. Kimberly noted that we can mention the housing statistics we have and the need for affordable housing for our workers but our focus for this document is job creation. We briefly discussed the marketing idea for Malletts Bay as the fishing capitol of Lake Champlain or some other similar tagline. We will discuss it further. Kimberly mentioned the Economic Development Office webpage that the consultant for the Town put together. She would like to see it as a marketing tool and attractive and interesting for companies surfing for relocation information. Right now the site is for providing information to the community which is necessary but the Council discussed wanting more like getting a domain name, making searches easier, having video components and interactive components. Earth Logic who just moved into Joe's building may be able to help us explore these ideas. Kimberly needs an intern or consultant to help maintain the page and keep it fresh. The group will continue to work on this as well.

Other Business

The deadline for applications for the Council are due July 23rd and the Select Board will make the appointment on the 28th. We have received an application from James Ehlers of Lake Champlain International, Inc. He would be a fantastic addition to the group if we don't receive any more applications.

The next CEDAC meeting will be August 20, 2009 at 8:00 a.m. at the Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted by,
Kimberly L. Murray, AICP